

A HISTORICAL STUDY OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE
IN THE LIGHT OF COMMUNIST GOALS

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INTRODUCTION

The Soviet Union, once freed from the rigidities of Stalinist foreign policy, shifted its challenge to the West. Khrushchev enunciated to the world a purposely elusive, ill-defined and vaguely formulated "peaceful competition" or "peaceful coexistence." Originally devised as only a tactical maneuver, an interval between battles, "peaceful coexistence" has now become a permanent element of Soviet strategy.

The present-day Soviet leaders are conscious of their position of strength. The practical conclusions they draw from this position of strength constitute a three part plan of action to reach their avowed goal of a Communist world empire. These conclusions are: 1) to avoid an all-out nuclear war; 2) to defend, at any price, The Soviet part of the present international "status quo"; and 3) to change the "status quo" in the non-communist world to the detriment of the West. This change would be brought about gradually and without an all-out war, preferably by political, economic and ideological weapons. This three part plan is well calculated to achieve the goal Khrushchev so picturesquely drew as the burial of all Capitalist (non-communist) systems.

Those good-intentioned people who believe Soviet friendship can be bought with warm handshaking or unilateral concessions, should remember Khrushchev's statement: "Friendship is true and

strong if people share the same view on events, history and life."¹

Despite the heated Sino-Soviet ideological dispute, it is clear that Khrushchev remains the essential architect of foreign policy for the Communist bloc and that his formulation of "peaceful coexistence" will, in the foreseeable future, continue to characterize bloc posture toward the West. The current Soviet posture of coexistence applies (as indeed it did under Stalin) to the period between the emergence of the first socialist state and the inevitable demise of the last capitalist state; although it is a period which may be prolonged, it is not indefinite. Impelled by the destructiveness of nuclear war to seek a change in tactics and immediate objectives, Soviet offers of coexistence involve no renunciation of the Communist belief in its ultimate triumph or of the basic ideology of class struggle. On the contrary, it presupposes an intensification of the political, ideological and economic struggle between the two systems. It rejects the "inevitability" of war because war in a nuclear age is no longer deemed an effective instrument of foreign policy; but it renounces neither "just" wars of liberation nor wars of defense when such military action is thought necessary.

It is then, a particular importance that we trace the chronological development of the theory of "peaceful coexistence" to watch it modified, changed and gradually become a permanent part of Soviet strategy. We will inquire into the tactics and objectives of that

policy and assess its implications and prospects for the free world. For in its subtlety, and in its appeals to the hopes and aspirations of all mankind, the "peaceful, competitive coexistence" of Khrushchev is far more serious a threat to the West than Stalin's "peaceful coexistence" ever was.

¹"Pravda," March 27, 1958.

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN OF THE THEORY OF COEXISTENCE

To insure the world-wide victory of Communism and heighten the economic and political prestige of his country without becoming involved in the mass destruction of war, what should a man do? Common sense would seem to dictate: be patient, bide your time, wait for your chance and accept a period of coexistence as unavoidable. Lenin, Stalin and Khrushchev all made this identical conclusion because they were practical men. But "peaceful coexistence" was not a Marxist doctrine.

The theory of "permanent revolution" was a principle of Communist doctrine in the years preceeding and immediately following the Bolshevik revolution. The idea had been formulated by Marx around 1850. At that time he was sure the European democratic revolutions, once they had sufficiently stirred up the working people of the highly industrialized countries, would grow to become an international uprising of the proletariat.

Trotsky borrowed this theory of permanent revolution from Marx and applied it to Russia in 1917. He said the Russian Revolution must not and could not stop at its borders. Under the influence of events in Russia, Europe and the world would become revolutionized. The final outcome would be one world - one socialist world.

If this did not happen, the revolution would be defeated by the attacks of world capitalism or would wither away in an economically and culturally primitive Russia.

If there was one characteristic common to all Russian leaders in 1917, it was their firm belief that world revolution and the subsequent collapse of the capitalist world were not far off. Lenin, too, was confident that the World War had shaken the Capitalist countries so severely that the situation was ripe for revolution in most of the countries of Europe. In March, 1919, at the founding Congress of the Communist International, Lenin said: "The bourgeoisie is experiencing wild fear before the growing revolutionary movement of the proletariat. It becomes clear, if we take into account that the course of events since the imperialist war is inevitably facilitating the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, that the international world revolution is beginning and increasing in all countries..... let the bourgeoisie continue to rage, let it still murder thousands of workers - the victory will be ours, the victory of the world Communist Revolution is certain."¹

Gregory Zinoviev, president of the International, certain that Europe was "dashing at mad speed toward the proletarian revolution," triumphantly declared: "Now as we write these lines, the Third International has as its foundation stones three Soviet Republics - those in Russia, in Hungary and in Bavaria. But no

one will be surprised if at the moment when these lines appear in print we shall have not three but six or more Soviet republics. Old Europe is dashing at mad speed towards proletarian revolution The victory of Communism in Germany is inescapable...Geographically the proletarian revolution moves from east to west. This trend of the proletarian revolution is now definitely established. The last events in Turkey have fully confirmed it.... Perhaps we shall see - for a few years and side by side with Communist Europe - American capitalism continue to exist. Perhaps even in England capitalism will continue to exist for a year or two, side by side with Communism in the whole of continental Europe."²

During this same period in the early days of the Soviet Republic, the theory of coexistence was born as a practical means to continue Communism. Thus Lenin who was richly endowed with political acumen, found this simple answer as early as 1918. In his article "Strange and Monstrous" he said that "the leftist Communists" were opposed to any peace with the imperialists. But if there were no peace and no peaceful coexistence, the socialist state could not successfully grow. "The socialist Republic, situated among imperialist powers," he wrote, "could not, from that point of view, conclude any economic treaties and could not exist unless it were to fly off to the moon."³ This was Lenin's answer and was an answer that any politician in his right mind would

have given at that time. A young Russia, faced by German military might had either to fly off to the moon or conclude the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, the first experiment in peaceful coexistence. After the period of foreign intervention, Lenin faced the same problem and again his answer was the same: peaceful coexistence with the capitalist states, with whom he was anxious to enter into economic relations to make them help Soviet Russia in her rehabilitation process. On February 2, 1920, Soviet Russia concluded a peace treaty with Estonia. Chicherin calls this treaty "the first experiment in peaceful coexistence with bourgeois states."⁴ By this time Russia had realized there was a stalemate wherein she could neither expand nor be destroyed. This realization marked the beginning of a long period of relatively normal relations with capitalist states. And from this time on, the subject of "peaceful coexistence" is mentioned more frequently in official Soviet declarations.

"Peaceful coexistence" then, was at first regarded to be a short-term tactic because a permanent, or even a prolonged accommodation between the Soviet Republic and the capitalist states was considered impossible. Later, when faced with the failure of concurrent revolutions in Europe and the surprising recuperative powers of world capitalism, Soviet Theoreticians were forced to rationalize a period of prolonged coexistence with the non-Communist world. This principle of peaceful coexistence then was implied in

Lenin's policies and writings, recognized and mentioned by Stalin and explicitly formulated by Khrushchev. Communism was forced to make important concessions to the exigencies of the moment, but in its steadfast adherence to the doctrine of irreconcilable hostility between the Communist and the capitalist worlds, it left little doubt as to the historical role coexistence was to play in Soviet strategy. It was never seriously doubted, nor indeed denied, that an inevitable and violent struggle between East and West would be the dramatic climax to this transistional epoch.

¹V.I. Lenin, "Speech at the opening of the First Congress of the Communist International," 1919, Selected Works (New York: International Publishers,) 1943 X, p. 27.

²Quoted in Michael T. Florinsky, "World Revolution and the U.S.S.R." (New York: McMillan Co., 1933), pp. 42-43.

³Quoted in Deborin, "Leninskii printsip mirnovo sosuchchestvovaniia gosudarstv razlichnykh sotsial'nykh sistem," "Voprosy Ekonomiki," No. 4 (April 1956), p. 17.

⁴Quoted in Louis Fischer, "Soviets in World Affairs", (Princeton, New Jersey, 1951), Vol I, p. 254.

CHAPTER II

TWO CAMPS THEORY

The true significance of the theory of peaceful coexistence with the capitalist world is understood only in the light of that more encompassing Soviet belief in the ultimate irreconcilability of the two worlds, as expressed in the "theory of the two camps." In February, 1919, Stalin put this theory into exact words: "the world is decisively and irrevocably split into two camps: the camp of imperialism and the camp of socialism.....The struggle between these two camps forms the axis around which all contemporary life revolves."⁵ One month later, Lenin emphasized the irreconcilable nature of the conflict between these camps: "We live not only in a state, but in a system of states, and the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with the imperialist states for a prolonged period of time is unthinkable. In the end, either one or the other will conquer."⁶ This quotation is not simply one among many. It has become a classic expression of an enduring Soviet belief, a kind of coded message for the initiated. Time and again, when Party leaders have not wanted to openly spell out their full revolutionary intentions, they have used the phrase "living not merely in a state, but in a system of states." This sounds harmless indeed when used in a "peaceful" context but every good Communist in

the world knows the remainder of the quote, knows that there is irreconcilable hostility between the "two camps." Stalin continued to cite it after Lenin's death and the Soviet Press has reprinted it innumerable times. Lenin reiterated this idea in several other talks such as his "Speech Delivered at a Meeting of Nuclei Secretaries of the Moscow Organization of the R.C.P.(Bolsheviks)" on November 26, 1920: "As long as capitalism and socialism exist, we cannot live in peace: in the end, one or the other will triumph - a funeral dirge will be sung either over the Soviet Republic or over world capitalism."⁷

The events of October, 1917 did not essentially alter the "two camps" theory but did change it somewhat. The difference consisted in the fact that the proletarians had conquered a state for themselves and now could face the bourgeoisie on two fronts: the domestic struggle, waged internally by the Communist parties and the diplomatic struggle, fought by Soviet Russia as an advanced detachment of the proletarian army. And the emergence of a Communist State was important. While formerly the notion of "two camps" was concerned only with the horizontal division of each nation into the exploiters and the exploited, after the 1917 revolution the interstate pattern of relationships was cut across by the exploiter-exploited dividing line. A single state of the exploited was now facing many states of the exploiters. The Soviet Constitution of 1923 expressed this thought and the Comintern proclaimed it too:

"A fundamental antagonism between two systems, two worlds, now overshadows the whole world situation. A more or less unstable situation has been, for the time being, maintained between them; on the one hand, there is the world of capitalism headed by America, and, on the other, the world of proletarian revolution headed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."⁸

This basic idea cannot be rejected without abandoning Leninism entirely. The criterion of this division of the world is twofold; it is both economic and political. A socialist country is one in which all the means of production are nationalized, or at least the economic heights are state owned, while the socialization of the remaining sectors is a foregone conclusion. And, in addition, the Communist Party must be in full control. Any country not fulfilling these two requirements is capitalist, even though its government may be controlled by those "opportunists and reformists," the socialists, who are, either intentionally or otherwise, agents of the bourgeoisie.

The concept of two hostile camps did not prevent Lenin from making a distinction among various capitalist nations. There were highly industrialized, imperialist Powers and there were nations exploited by these Powers, the colonial or semi-colonial countries. These colonial or semi-colonial nations, whose interests collided with those of the imperialist Powers, were considered by Lenin as

natural allies of the Proletariat. They represented the other section of the revolutionary front. They would eventually enter the Socialist camp through the door of revolution, but meanwhile, their conflicts with the imperial Powers could be exploited by the Proletariat in its fight against imperialism. This distinction among the members of the capitalist camp is important because it sheds light on Communist tactics carried out in the present and also because it helps us to better understand the Soviet concept of peaceful coexistence.

⁵Stalin, "Dva lageria," Feb 22, 1919, in "Sochineniia", IV, p. 232.

⁶Lenin, "Otchet Tsentral'nogo Komiteta," March 18, 1919, "Sochineniia" XXIV, p. 122.

⁷Lenin, "Selected Works" (New York International Publishers, 1943) VIII, p. 297.

⁸Bela Kun, ed., "Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v Dokumentakh; Resheniia, Tezisy i Vozzvaniiia Kongressov Kominterna i Plenumov IKKI, 1919-1932, p. 537.

CHAPTER III

PERFECT AND IMPERFECT COEXISTENCE

Stalin clearly stated the relationship between the "two camps" idea and the idea of a Soviet world state on December 30, 1922, to the First Congress of the Soviets of the USSR. In his Declaration on the Formation of the USSR, he maintained that "since the formation of the Soviet Republics, the states of the world have been split into two camps; the camp of capitalism and the camp of socialism." The contrast between them was alleged to be that the capitalist camp was "powerless to organize the collaboration of nations," whereas the Soviet camp had successfully solved this problem. For this reason, the USSR, "built on the basis of the peaceful coexistence and fraternal collaboration of nations...will mark a new decisive advance toward the amalgamation of the toilers of all countries into a World Socialist Soviet Republic." Of these two camps, only the Soviet Camp was to survive and it would become the Soviet world state. In this world state there would be genuine "peaceful coexistence and fraternal collaboration of nations." This would be in contrast to the nations existing under capitalism, where "we find national animosities and inequality, colonial slavery and chauvinism, national oppression and pogroms, imperialist brutality and wars."⁹

When the Soviet leaders speak of peaceful coexistence of nations, it is apparent that they have two types in mind: the "perfect" type, when all nations will be united in a Soviet world state; and that dangerous, unstable type of coexistence in which no one can place any confidence because it will last only so long as any capitalist nation survives. Accordingly, even if the Soviet leaders should want to coexist peacefully with capitalist states for an indefinite period, they believe that the nature of capitalism makes such an arrangement impossible.

The supposedly war-producing tensions within the capitalist world do not cause dismay to the Soviet formulators of theory. It is, on the contrary, the prime duty of all Communists to exploit them and to prod the states of the non-Soviet world to fight each other so that the capitalist camp will be torn to pieces from within. This will hasten the day when it will no longer be necessary to speak of two camps and this impossible, distasteful type of peaceful coexistence.

Lenin repeatedly insisted: "So long as we have not conquered the whole world, so long as we remain economically and militarily weaker than the capitalist world...we must know how to use the contradictions and oppositions among the capitalists."¹⁰ Similarly, in March, 1921, Stalin chided Chicherin for underestimating the contradictions within the non-Soviet world. "The whole purpose of

the existence of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs," Stalin lectured, "is to take account of these contradictions, to base ourselves upon them, and to maneuver among these contradictions."¹¹ Stalin spelled out these contradictions as 1) between the proletariat and bourgeoisie within capitalist countries, 2) between the imperial powers struggling for the conquest of foreign territories, 3) among the imperialist powers and their colonial and dependent peoples, 4) between the victorious and vanquished imperial powers and their colonial and dependent peoples, and 5) among the victorious powers themselves.¹²

Peaceful coexistence then is imperfect when it is applied to the relationships between countries divided by antagonistic contradictions which may ultimately lead to open conflict. "Perfect" coexistence, a higher form of political and economic collaboration, characterizes relations only among socialist states.

FOOTNOTES

⁹Stalin, "Deklaratsiia ob obrazovanii Soiuza Sovetskikh Sotsialisticheskikh Respublik," Dec. 30, 1922, in "Sochineniia," V, 159, 393-94. For similar statements by Stalin on the "two camps," see: Stalin, "Ob ob'edinenii Sovetskikh Respublik," Dec 26, 1922, in ibid., V 154-55; "Oktiabr'skaia revoliutsiia i taktika russikh kommunistov," Dec 17, 1924, in ibid., VI, 400; "K itogam rabot XIV," in ibid., VII, 281-82; "Mezhdunarodnoe polozhenie i oborona BSSR," Aug 1, 1927, in ibid., X, 51; "Beseda s pervoi amerikanskoi rabochei delegatsiei," Sept 9, 1927, in ibid., X, 135; "Ob itogakh iul'skogo Plenuma TsK VKP(b)," July 13, 1928, in ibid., XI, 203; "Politicheskii otchet Tsentralnogo Komiteta XVI S'ezdu VKP (b)," June 27, 1930, in ibid., XII 255.

¹⁰Lenin, "Rech' na sobranii sekretarei," in "Sochineniia," XXV, 498.

¹¹Stalin, "Doklad ob ocherednykh zadachakh partii v natsional'nom voprose," March 10, 1921, in "Sochineniia," V, 42.

¹²Stalin listed these contradictions in various ways with various degrees of completeness on the following occasions: "Ob osnovakh Leninizma," April, 1924, in "O Lenine i Leninizme," pp 24-26; "K itogam rabot XIV," in "Sochineniia," VII, 96; "Politicheskii otchet," Dec 18, 1925, in ibid., VII, 262-81; "Eshche raz o sotsial-demokraticheskom uklone v nashei partii," Dec 7, 1926, in ibid., IX, 26; "Politicheskii otchet," June 27, 1930, in ibid., XII, 248-54.

CHAPTER IV

COEXISTENCE AND TRADE

By "maneuvering among these contradictions" as Stalin commanded, the Russian leaders planned to gain a breathing spell from capitalist attack to strengthen the Soviet homeland and to rebuild her economic potential so they could meet any eventuality. Consequently peaceful coexistence has always been closely associated with Soviet efforts to stimulate those economic ties with the capitalist world which were essential for the reconstruction of Fortress Russia. The Soviet delegates who attended the International Economic Conference at Genoa in April, 1922 displayed a conciliatory attitude calculated to produce trade. Lenin openly acknowledged that it would be better business to supplant talk of revolution by talk of peaceful coexistence. He said: "We welcomed Genoa, we understood perfectly well and did not conceal it that we were going there as merchants because trade with capitalist countries is absolutely essential for us."¹³ Chicherin, who headed the Russian delegation to Genoa, made an effort to speak like a merchant without ceasing to be a Communist: "While remaining faithful to the principles of Communism, the Russian delegation recognizes that in the present historical period in which there is the possibility of the parallel existence of the old and new expanding socialist order, economic competition between

states representing the two systems of property is imperatively necessary for general economic reconstruction."¹⁴ Reading between the lines, Chicherin meant that the economic cooperation, based on peaceful coexistence which was imperative "in the present historical period" would not be a subject for discussion in the next historical period because there would then be only one world system in operation.

The actual time when the "present historical period" would end was doubtful. In the early days of Soviet power, it was expected to be a few months or at most a few years but by 1925 Stalin had admitted that "what at first seemed to be a short breathing spell after the war has turned into a whole period of respite." This prolonged breathing spell resulted from "a temporary equilibrium of forces" between the two camps.¹⁵ Because the stabilization of the capitalist camp was illusory and temporary and the strength of the Soviet camp was steadily increasing, the coexistence between them was considered, at best, a provisional and unstable arrangement.¹⁶ Stalin summed it up: "Thus we have two stabilizations....Who will conquer whom - that is the essence of the entire matter."¹⁷

By December, 1927, Stalin was offering this alarming report of an impending attack on Russia by the capitalists:

If two years ago it was possible and necessary to speak of a period of a certain equilibrium and "peaceful coexistence" between the USSR and the capitalist countries, now we can assert that the period of "peaceful coexistence" is receding into the past, and giving way to periods of imper-

ialist surges and preparation for an intervention against the USSR.¹⁸

The fact that Stalin's expressed fears did not materialize does not detract from the value of this incident, because it sheds light on Soviet thinking on the nature and purpose of peaceful co-existence. Peace must be maintained, Stalin insisted, because the USSR was still weak and it needed time to build up its strength so it could later fight the non-Soviet world. For the time being, Stalin stated, peaceful construction must continue and war "must be postponed either until the moment when the proletarian revolution in Europe matures, or until the moment when the colonial revolutions have fully matured, or lastly, until the moment when the capitalists fight among themselves over the division of colonies."¹⁹ During this indefinite period "the simultaneous existence of two economic systems.....compels the USSR to resort to economic maneuvering and utilizing economic contacts with the capitalist countries."²⁰

Attempts to develop economic contacts with capitalist countries continued to coincide with Soviet insistence upon peaceful co-existence. At the International Economic Conference in Geneva in May, 1927, Obolenskii-Ossinkii, the chief Soviet delegate introduced this draft resolution: "With regard to the great importance of full participation of the USSR in world trade, the Conference recommends to all states to develop their relations with the Soviet Union on the basis of a pacific coexistence of two different economic systems."²¹

Under the threat of the withdrawal of further Soviet participation, the Conference substantially adopted this resolution.

In his speech to the Sixth Congress of Soviets in March, 1931, Molotov recalled the position of the Soviet delegates at the 1927 Geneva Conference. "The contradictions between the two economic systems, which during a certain historical period must unavoidably coexist, do not exclude the possibility of some kind of arrangement between them." "Today," Molotov added, "we still hold the same view." Each camp drew its own conclusions from this uneasy truce. "Our conclusions are that this historical period must be used to the utmost to gain a victory for our system. The purpose of our enemy is to wipe off the face of the earth the Soviet state, the socialist state. Two worlds are brought face to face."²² "Peaceful coexistence was a different way to say that both worlds are unalterably opposed.

Litvinov reiterated the same call for peaceful coexistence at Geneva in May, 1931, in a more diplomatically worded statement slanted for foreign consumption. He hoped to foster trade with the non-Soviet world by proposing that the Commission of Inquiry for European Union adopt an economic non-aggression pact. Litvinov stated such a pact "would be fresh confirmation of the principle adopted by the 1927 Conference as to the peaceful coexistence, at the given historical stage, of two economic systems."²³ Even this

purposely polite approach retained the reference to coexistence at "the given historical stage." Litvinov repeated his plea for this pact at the World Monetary and Economic Conference at London in June, 1933 but, as at Geneva in 1931, nothing came of it.²⁴ Stalin reaffirmed the connection between trade and peaceful coexistence in January, 1934, when he stated that Soviet foreign policy was one "of preserving peace and of strengthening trade relations with all countries....Those who want peace and seek business ties with us will always receive our support."²⁵

During the first decade of its existence, Russia was able to restore a major portion of its industry, transportation and agriculture. Russia imported equipment and raw materials while advocating peaceful coexistence. Thus Russia strengthened the homeland and could deal politically with the world during the pre-war 1930's from a stronger position.

FOOTNOTES

¹³Lenin, "mezhdunarodnom i vnutrennem polozhenii Sovetskoi Pespubliki," March 6, 1922, in "Sochineniia," XXVII, 169.

¹⁴Speech by Chicherin, April 10, 1922, quoted in V.P. Potemkin, ed., "Istoriia diplomatii" (Moscow, Leningrad, 1945), III, 170.

¹⁵Stalin, "Politicheskii otchet," Dec 18, 1925, in "Sochineniia," VII, 262.

¹⁶Ibid., VII, 281-88.

¹⁷Stalin, "K itogam rabot XIV," in ibid., VII, 95.

¹⁸Stalin, "Politicheskii otchet Tsentral'nogo Komiteta," Dec 3, 1927, in ibid., X, 288.

¹⁹Ibid., X, 288-89.

²⁰"Programma," in "Kommunisticheskii Internatsional v dokumentakh," p. 34.

²¹"Records of the International Economic Conference of 1927," quoted in Davis, "Soviets at Geneva," p. 201.

²²"Doklad Predsovnarkoma tov. Molotova VI s"ezdu sovetov USSR," "Izvestiia," March 12, 1931, page 3.

²³Statement by Litvinov on the Soviet Draft for a Pact of Economic Non-Aggression, May 21, 1931, in Degras, ed., "Soviet Documents," II, 501.

²⁴Davis, "Soviets at Geneva," pp. 246-47.

²⁵Stalin, "Otchetnyi doklad XVII s"ezdu partii o rabote TsK VKP(b)," Jan 26, 1934, in "Sochineniia," XIII, 305.

CHAPTER V.

COEXISTENCE IN THE 1930'S

The Soviet Union entered the League of Nations in September 1934. This was the culmination of a series of political gestures toward peaceful coexistence generally associated with the efforts of Maxim Litvinov. His efforts secured a series of non-aggression and neutrality pacts²⁶ and a separate treaty between Russia and the states on its western and southern borders.²⁷ But a careful reading of the speech Litvinov made on the occasion of Russia's entry into the League of Nations discloses certain reservations and limitations about peaceful coexistence. He asserted:

"We have advocated the peaceful coexistence of different social-political systems at a given historical stage again and again at international conferences....The invitation to the Soviet Union to join the League of Nations may be said to represent the final victory of this principle....The Soviet Union is entering into the League today as a representative of a new social-economic system, not renouncing any of its special features....In order to make our position quite clear, I should like further to state that the idea in itself of an association of nations contains nothing theoretically unacceptable for the Soviet state and its ideology. The Soviet Union is itself a league of nations in the best sense of the word, uniting over two hundred nationalities, thirteen of which have a population of not less than one million each, and others such as Russia and the Ukraine, a population running into scores of millions. I will make so bold as to claim that never before have so many nations coexisted so peacefully within a single state."²⁸

Here again we find two different types of coexistence which were explained in Chapter III. The nations within the Soviet "system or states" have found the secret of perfect coexistence which could be called "collaboration." This is possible only under the Communist rule. Meanwhile, the relationship between the Soviet world and the non-Communist nations is called "peaceful coexistence" or "imperfect coexistence." At this "given historical stage" this "imperfect coexistence" is necessary. It will last until the last non-Communist nation is brought "peacefully" into the Soviet world state. Then will come into being the golden era of "Perfect peaceful coexistence" and "collaboration."

As war approached, during the latter 1930's, Stalin experimented and maneuvered within the confines of the imperfect form of coexistence, in an attempt to escape military conflict. If coexistence should prove impossible, he would seek to be involved only under the most favorable circumstances. While pursuing this policy and carrying on intensive negotiations with both sides, Stalin was noncommittal: "We stand for peace and the strengthening of business relations with all countries."²⁹ When Stalin at length made a bargain with the Nazis who offered him better terms than the Allies, Molotov defended the decision in terms of Lenin's "well-known principle regarding the peaceful coexistence of the Soviet state and capitalist countries." As long as this coexistence served

Russia's best interest, the nature of these capitalist countries made no difference. Pointing to the non-aggression and neutrality pact signed by Russia and Fascist Italy in 1933, Molotov declared: "It has never occurred to anybody as yet to object to this treaty, and that is natural, for inasmuch as this pact meets the interests of the USSR, it is in accord with our principle of peaceful coexistence of the USSR and capitalist states."³⁰ It was not Stalin's fault that Hitler terminated the era of peaceful coexistence in June, 1941.

²⁶Litvinov, "Against Aggression," pp 135-69; T.A. Taracouzio, "War and Peace in Soviet Diplomacy," (New York, 1940), pp 319-21.

²⁷Litvinov, "Against Aggression," pp. 170-80; Davis, "Soviets at Geneva," p. 190.

²⁸Litvinov's Speech at the League Assembly on the Entry of the USSR into the League of Nations, Sept 18, 1934, in Degras, ed., "Soviet Documents," III, pp. 92-93.

²⁹Stalin, "Otchetnyi doklad na XIII s"ezde," March 10, 1939, p. 40.

³⁰"O ratifikatsii sovetsko-germanskogo dogovora o nenapadenii soobshchenie tov. Molotova na zasedanii Verkhovnogo Soveta Soiuz SSR 31-go avgusta 1939 goda," "Pravda," Sept 1, 1939.

CHAPTER VI

POST-WAR COEXISTENCE

After the war, Stalin realized (much better than did the Western governments) the dire need to heal the deep wounds inflicted on Russia by the Nazis. An extremely heavy loss of life, numbering in the millions, and the devastation of the territory west of the Volga made it impossible for Russia even to think about war against the Western Powers. Stalin's boisterous and aggressive policy covered up the military inferiority of the USSR for several years. Foreign Minister V.M. Molotov, speaking in 1945, clearly stated that the USSR would need peace for a long time in order "to overtake and surpass economically the most developed capitalist countries of Europe and the USA."³¹

Because the USSR had cooperated with the Western Allies during the war, many believed the cooperation would continue in post-war years. This prayerful hope was, from the beginning, doomed because of the failure to understand that this imperfect type of co-existence was not a long-range Soviet goal. During the war Russia had no alternative. She had to cooperate with the capitalist Allies. A release from the perils of war brought a new opportunity to pursue aggressive policies and exploit every avenue which would some day lead to the "perfect" type of coexistence among all nations. But by

1947, the time had come to openly reassert orthodox Communist doctrine lest the "faithful" throughout the world become ideologically confused and continue cooperating with non-Communist elements. Accordingly, the Declaration of the founding Cominform Conference in September, 1947, declared that "two opposite political lines have crystallized." Returning to familiar terminology, these were described as "two camps - the camp of imperialism and anti-democratic forces, whose chief aim is the establishment of a world-wide American imperialist hegemony and the crushing of democracy; and the anti-imperialist, democratic camp, whose chief aim is the elimination of imperialism."³² The world was once again divided into two irreconcilable parts. America had been officially reinstated as leader of the "imperialist" camp and the Soviet regime had taken as its "chief aim...the elimination of imperialism." Two months later, an editorial in the Soviet press, commemorating the thirtieth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, warned that while the coexistence of the two systems is inevitable "for a fairly long time.... the capitalist system, as a historically transitory form of society, is nearing its end. It will be replaced by a more perfect order of social relations such as has already been inaugurated in the Soviet Union."³³ Once capitalism has been destroyed, we would then have a world soviet state with perfect peaceful coexistence of all member states.

The maneuver of an officially sponsored Soviet "peace" campaign has been an important and long-standing tactic of peaceful co-existence and dates back to the Peace Decree of November 8, 1917.³⁴ Systematic elaboration and broadcasting of post-World War II "peace" pronouncements was entrusted to several Communist-created organizations, the most important of which has been the World Congress of Peace Partisans, first convened in April, 1949, and its Permanent Committee, now called the World Peace Council.³⁵ Amid the gentle cooing of the dove of peace, these organizations have pressed upon world opinion such propaganda devices as the Stockholm Peace Petition and a Pact of Peace to be signed by the five Great Powers. A close scrutiny of this postwar "peace" propaganda discloses two basic and familiar Russian purposes: to provide a "breathing spell" for the Soviets and to exploit divisions in the non-Soviet world. In the name of "peace" they attacked the political federation of Europe, the Council of Europe, the Schuman Plan, the European Defense Community, the Organization for European Economic Cooperation, the European Payments Union, the European Economic Community and the Euratom. Their attacks against the European Defence Community and against West Germany joining NATO were the strongest and most prolonged. Both EDC and NATO brought the West into an armed community of nations. These "peace front" organizations violently opposed the rearming of the non-Communist countries with

talk of "peaceful coexistence" Expressions of peaceful intentions were meant to persuade a body of sympathetic, or at least, neutralist, opinion that there is no need to rearm. A change, designed for the same audience states that the Soviet Union wants "peace," and that therefore its terms ought to be accepted, whatever they might be. The Soviet leaders have effectively exploited man's fear of war and atomic destruction and his deep-rooted longing for peace which in this atomic age frequently takes the form of a desire for peace at any price. When successful, this "peace" propaganda serves three purposes: it distracts attention from war-like Soviet actions; it immobilizes resistance to Russian moves and it prevents an effective collective response from the non-Soviet world to an aggressive Soviet policy.

³¹Molotov, "Voprosy Vneshnei Politiki, Rechni i Zaizvleniia," April' 1945 - Yun' 1948, p. 28-29.

³²Deklaratsiia, Sept 1947, in "Informatsionnoe soveshchanie" p.6-7.

³³"Thirty Years," in "New Times" Nov 7, 1947, p. 3.

³⁴Lenin, "Doklad o mire," Nov 8, 1917, in "Sochineniia" XXII,13-14.

³⁵The forerunners of the First Congress of Peace Partisans were the August, 1948, Congress of Cultural Leaders in Defense of Peace (Wroclaw, Poland) and the March, 1949, Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace (New York). "Peace" proclamations similar to those of the World Congress of Peace Partisans and the World Peace Council are constantly issued by such Soviet-controlled organizations as the World Federation of Democratic Women, World Federation of Democratic Youth, International Union of Students, International Organization of Democratic Journalists, International Association of Democratic Lawyers and so forth. For a history of the postwar Soviet "peace" movement, see A.I. Oparin, "Narody mira v bor'be za mir," (Moscow, 1951), p. 1-23.

CHAPTER VII

POST-STALIN COEXISTENCE

The "breathing space" which history granted to the capitalist powers had, in Marxist eyes, polarized the globe into a world center of capitalism and a world center of socialism. Both powers struggle for the conquest of the world. That this period of "coexistence," this "breathing space," need not be a peaceful one was implicit in the concept. All were convinced that an inevitable and violent struggle between East and West would take place. The dramatic climax of this struggle would be a world-wide, stateless society. This logical inconsistency of advocating "coexistence" on the one hand, while subscribing to the doctrine of "inevitable" war with the "capitalist encirclement" on the other, was not lost on Stalin's successors. So that such doctrinal dicta would not prove an obstacle to a detente with the West, Khrushchev, at the Twentieth Party Congress in January, 1956, relegated Stalin's already diluted theses of "capitalist encirclement" and the "inevitable clash" to historical significance only - back to a time when the USSR, the "first socialist state," was a beleaguered island in a hostile capitalist sea. Khrushchev, in his first major theoretical pronouncement, denied the allegation "that the Soviet Union advances the principle of peaceful coexistence merely out of tactical considerations" and

pronounced the doctrine "a fundamental principle of Soviet foreign policy." While admitting: "The Leninist principle of the peaceful coexistence of states with different social systems has always been and remains the general line of our country's foreign policy," he contended that Soviet Bloc strength and political conditions have so changed since Lenin's day that "war is not fatalistically inevitable. Today there are mighty social and political forces possessing formidable means to prevent the imperialists from unleashing war...." The socialist system will win the competition between the two systems, he added, but "this by no means signifies that its victory will be achieved through armed interference by the socialist countries in the internal affairs of the capitalist countries."³⁶

Three years later, at the Twenty-first Party Congress, Khrushchev reaffirmed this non-inevitability of war doctrine and virtually repudiated Lenin's oft-repeated stern admonition that "only after we have overthrown, finally vanquished and expropriated the bourgeoisie of the whole world, and not only of one country, will war become impossible."³⁷ He also predicted the "real possibility of excluding world war from the life of society....even before the universal triumph of socialism, while capitalism still exists in a part of the world."³⁸

However, the doctrinal pronouncement that "war is not inevi-

table" was a conditional one. Since its promulgation at the Twentieth Party Congress, the Soviet Premier has taken great pains to state the conditions under which the thesis would not operate and war would be unavoidable. Two years prior to the abortive summit conference in Paris, Khrushchev made it clear that "for a summit conference to yield positive results, the status quo should be recognized, that is to say, that there are two systems of states in the world - the capitalist and the socialist systems. The principles of peaceful coexistence should be recognized and there should be no interference in the affairs of other states....If the status quo is not recognized, if the socialist states are ignored....then it is, of course, impossible to come to terms."³⁹ And at a luncheon for visiting Finnish President Kekkonen on May 24, 1958, Khrushchev declared: "In order to establish stability in the world and avert a new war, it is necessary to recognize the status quo - that is, the prevailing situation - and not try to change the situation by force. Otherwise the inevitability of war will have to be recognized."⁴⁰ Khrushchev thus made it clear that world peace would be jeopardized by a forcible attempt to upset the status quo - a status quo based on the existence of two world power blocs, one of which includes the satellite regimes as presently constituted.

A second theoretical revision at the Twentieth Party Congress was that the new favorable correlation of forces in the world meant

that there may be different paths to socialism in different countries and that a violent changeover from capitalism to socialism was no longer obligatory. "It is not true," Khrushchev asserted, "that we regard violence and civil war as the only means of remaking society." In some countries, he stated, the working class is in a position "to capture a stable majority in parliament" and transform the body into a "genuine instrument of the people's will."⁴¹

It is clear that like the "inevitability of war" doctrine, the concept of "peaceful transition" is also highly qualified. The transfer of power to the working class may indeed be peaceful if, to quote Marx, "the old has enough intelligence to go to its death without a struggle; (but) forcibly if it resists this necessity."⁴² Stalin, with equal cynicism, in an interview with H.G. Wells in 1934, remarked: "Communists do not in the least idealize methods of violencethey would be very pleased to drop violent methods if the ruling class agreed to give way to the working class."⁴³ In short, whether revolutionary force will be used by the Communists to seize power in separate countries during the period of coexistence, will depend not so much on the proletariat as on the measure of resistance put up by the exploiting classes. As put by "Kommunist": "Under different conditions and depending upon the circumstances, the working class will use parliamentary or non-parliamentary forms in their struggle for power, and will adopt peaceful or violent methods to transform the capitalist economy to a socialist one."⁴⁴

If then, there is any one consistent element in the current formulation of the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence," it is the repeated Soviet insistence that "peaceful coexistence and competition of the two systems do not at all imply liquidation of the class struggle....both within the capitalist countries and in the international arena, but signify a continuation, a further development of this struggle in new conditions and in new forms."⁴⁵ The current Soviet leadership vigorously rejects the suggestion that the coexistence of two different social systems implies any lessening of the irreconcilable "contradictions" which exist between them. To do so would be to deny the Marxist analysis of perpetual social struggle. As Shepilov has said: "Peaceful coexistence does not mean a quiet life. As long as different social and political systems exist, contradictions between them are inevitable. Peaceful coexistence is a struggle, political, economic, ideological....Coexistence means that one does not fight the other, does not attempt to solve international disputes by arms, but that one competes through peaceful work and economic and cultural activities....But we would cease to be Marxist - Leninists if we forgot the elementary laws of social life, the laws of class struggle."⁴⁶

FOOTNOTES

36"Pravda," Feb 15, 1956. Khrushchev's "modification" of Lenin's thesis that war is inevitable as long as capitalism exists, had been preceded by other such Soviet efforts to portray Communism as confident of its ability to triumph without war. At the height of the Korean War, for example, Stalin was asked whether he considered a new world war inevitable and he replied, "No. At least at the present time it cannot be considered inevitable....Peace will be preserved and made lasting if the people take the cause of the preservation of peace into their own hands and defend it to the end." "Pravda," Feb 17, 1951. In September 1951, the Soviet Union's leading journal of philosophy, "Voprosy filosofii," affirmed that because of the "strengthening power of the Soviet Union, the multiplication of its economic successes and the strengthening of its defense capabilities....with every new year of postwar development there takes place a further change in the relationship of forces between the camp of peace supporters and the camp of war mongers in favor of the camp of peace. That is why in contemporary historical conditions it is impossible categorically to affirm that the coming of a new world war is inevitable. The Marxist-Leninist thesis of the inevitability of war in the epoch of imperialism which was correct for some conditions cannot be carried over unconditionally into new historical conditions." "New York Times," Sept 25, 1951, p. 6. These words were written more in a propaganda than in a doctrinal context and it was left to Khrushchev to imbue this doctrinal revision with the "legality" of a Party Congress endorsement.

37V.I. Lenin, "Collected Works," (International Publishers, New York, 1942), XIX, p. 364.

38"Pravda", January 28, 1959.

39"Efforts of the Soviet Union Towards Summit Talks : Documents, January - May 1958" (London: "Soviet News," 1958), p. 47-48.

40"Pravda," May 24, 1958.

41"Pravda," February 15, 1956.

42Quoted in A. Alexeyev, "Two Systems - Two Results," International Affairs, (Moscow) No. 7 (July 1957), p. 13.

⁴³Quoted in Raymond Garthoff, "Soviet Military Doctrine," (Glencoe, Illinois, Free Press, 1953), p. 11.

⁴⁴"Kommunist," No. 3 (February, 1956), p. 32.

⁴⁵T. Timofeyev, "Inter-State Relations and Social Contradictions," "International Affairs," (Moscow), No. 2, February, 1960, p. 12.

⁴⁶"Pravda," February 13, 1957.

CHAPTER VIII

THE END OF COEXISTENCE

In an interview with journalists Hearst, Smith and Conniff in February, 1955, Khrushchev said: "You hold that capitalism is immutable and that the future belongs to the capitalist system. We, on our part, consider that Communism is invincible and that the future belongs to the Communist system....As to how long this coexistence can last, the answer is that this will depend on historical conditions and historical development....When this will come about is not known."⁴⁷

Despite this statement by Khrushchev, there have been many phrophecies by Russian theoreticians to pinpoint the end of coexistence. As we have seen in Chapters I and II, Lenin considered "the existence of the Soviet Republic side by side with the imperialist states for a prolonged period of time" unthinkable. In July, 1919 he predicted: "By next July we shall greet the victory of the International Soviet Republic and this victory will be complete and irreversible."⁴⁸ When Lenin's forecasts proved untrue, attempts were made by various Soviet Theoreticians to redefine Lenin's "a prolonged period" and "in the end." Then Lenin made the statement: "Ten to twenty years of correct relations with the peasantry and our victory on a world scale is assured....otherwise it may be

necessary to suffer through another twenty to forty years of White Terror."⁴⁹ Accordingly, world victory might be expected between 1931 at the earliest and 1961 at the latest.

In "Voprosy ekinomiki" of April, 1952, the Soviet economist, G.V. Kozlov wrote: "In the first half of the twentieth century the great October Socialist Revolution conquered in our country...China and a series of countries of Central and South-eastern Europe have fallen out of the capitalist system....the second half of the twentieth century will produce the complete victory of communism throughout the entire world."⁵⁰

In a speech on November 6, 1955, First Deputy Premier L.M. Kaganovich confirmed the same prediction: "The immortal ideas of Marx and Lenin penetrated into all corners of the earth and entered into the consciousness of the working masses of all countries.... If the nineteenth century was the century of capitalism, the twentieth century is the century for the triumph of socialism and communism."⁵¹

These predict the complete world victory of communism and the end of "peaceful coexistence" by the end of this century. Whether this end comes sooner or later, an end is definitely expected and unquestionably anticipated. The end of "coexistence" will mark the beginning of a new world Soviet state where "perfect coexistence" will supplant the "imperfect" type.

FOOTNOTES

⁴⁷"Pravda," February 11, 1955.

⁴⁸Lenin, in "Sochineniia," XXIV, p. 381.

⁴⁹"Chetyrnadtsataia konferentsiia RKP (b)," April 27-29, 1925, in KPSS v rez., II, p. 48.

⁵⁰"Voprosy ekonomiki," No. 4, (April 1952), pp. 85-86

⁵¹"Pravda," November 7, 1955, p. 2.

CHAPTER IX

COEXISTENCE IN RETROSPECT

In spite of the present Russian emphasis upon a struggle waged by non-military means, the West cannot infer from the doctrine of coexistence that the final victory will be free from conflict and war. On the contrary, the doctrine asserts rather explicitly that the period of transition will be one of unrest, full of revolutions and colonial wars in which armed clashes between the two systems are always an imminent, if not an inevitable, possibility. We do no injustice to current Kremlin policy if we note the persistence of that curious juxtaposition of war and peace in Soviet thinking which is the legacy of Clausewitz's influence on Lenin and which perhaps was nowhere more frankly and openly expressed than in the thesis of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International: "The International policy of the USSR is a peace policy which.... strives to put off the conflict with imperialism for as long as possible....The peace policy of the proletarian state certainly does not imply that the Soviet state has become reconciled with capitalism....There is no contradiction, however, between the Soviet government's preparation for defence and for revolutionary war and a consistent peace policy. Revolutionary war of the proletarian dictatorship is but a continuation of revolutionary peace policy 'by other means'."52

It is clear from the Communist doctrine of rising and declining forces that Soviet leaders feel that the longer the outbreak of a major war between the two opposing camps can be postponed, the greater will be the economic and political strength of the socialist camp in relation to the West and the better the chances of a victory without conflict. The "peaceful coexistence" which is thus offered the West is "a doctrine of protracted conflict....a strategy for annihilating the opponent over a period of time by limited operations, by feints and maneuvers, psychological manipulations and diverse forms of violence."⁵³

⁵²"Theses and Resolutions of the VI World Congress of the International," "International Press Correspondence," Vol. VIII, No. 84, (November 28, 1928), p. 1590.

⁵³R. Strausz-Hupe, et al., "Protracted Conflict" (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1959), p. 2.

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A HISTORICAL STUDY OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE
IN THE LIGHT OF COMMUNIST GOALS

by Daniel Francis Byrne

Hugh P. Helso

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Marxist theory of revolution was an immediate and complete revolution. There was no idea of coexistence. Trotsky borrowed the theory of permanent revolution and applied it to Russia in 1917. He said the Russian revolution must not and could not stop at its borders.

During the early days of the Soviet republic, the theory of coexistence was born as a practical means to continued Communism. Peaceful coexistence was at first regarded to be a short term tactic but has become permanent.

The world is divided into two economic systems but this applies also to the political systems. One of the other of these would win and the communist is convinced it will be the communist system which will win by revolution.

"Perfect" coexistence is the relationship between socialist states while "imperfect" coexistence is the relationship between communist and non-communist states. This relationship could lead to open conflict.

It was necessary for the communist to trade with non-communist countries to strengthen the economy of the country. Lenin openly acknowledged that it would be better business to supplant talk of revolution by talk of peaceful coexistence. Peace was to be maintained because the USSR was still weak and needed time to build. This would enable her to later fight the non-communist world. Nations were to recognize and develop their relations with the USSR on the basis of two different economic systems.

Bargains were to be made with any nation who would serve Russia's best interest. Thus the bargain with Germany before World War II.

Because the USSR had cooperated with the Western Allies during the war, many believed the cooperation would continue in post war years. This was doomed to failure because this "imperfect" type of coexistence was not a long range Soviet goal. They began to push peace propaganda to provide a breathing spell and to persuade neutralists and sympathizers that there was no need to rearm. This serves three purposes; it distracts attention from war-like Soviet action, it immobilizes resistance to Russian moves, and it prevents an effective response from the non-Soviet world to an aggressive Soviet policy.

Khrushchev proclaimed that war was not inevitable and Socialism would overcome by winning the competition. Whether the Communists use power will depend on the reaction of the ruling class of the non-Communist world.

The success of peaceful coexistence is assured although the timetable has been adjusted. The end of coexistence will mark the beginning of a new world Soviet state where "perfect" coexistence will supplant the "imperfect" type.

The peace policy of the USSR does not imply that the Soviet state has become reconciled with capitalism nor does it mean that final victory will be free from conflict.